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Driver held in crash tells troopers she smoked 'bowl' of pot

Troopers said they found a marijuana pipe in the 26-year-old woman's Dodge Durango. According to booking paperwork from the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office, she told troopers she'd smoked "a bowl" earlier that day.

By Jennifer Sullivan

Seattle Times staff reporter



A Granite Falls woman accused of causing a multivehicle crash Monday that left nine people hurt had smoked marijuana before getting behind the wheel, according to the State Patrol.

The 26-year-old woman, identified by the State Patrol as Heather Marie Lee, told troopers that she collided with another car on Highway 2 near Monroe after turning to look at her children, who were fighting in the back seat, according to booking paperwork released

Tuesday by the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office.

Troopers reported finding a marijuana pipe in Lee's 2002 Dodge Durango. The woman told troopers that she smoked "a bowl" of marijuana earlier in the day, the booking paperwork said. It wasn't clear how long before the accident she allegedly smoked marijuana. Blood-test results are pending.

Lee was booked into the Snohomish County Jail for investigation of three counts of vehicular assault. During her first court appearance hearing Tuesday she was in a wheelchair with her leg in a cast. A judge set her bail at \$100,000.

State Patrol Trooper Keith Leary said that investigators have not determined a cause of the crash.

"We are looking at her statements that she smoked marijuana, and we found a marijuana pipe in the vehicle. We're also looking at inattention as a factor," Leary said.

While Lee's children, ages 1 and 5, were not hurt, a 10-year-old boy in another vehicle was taken to Seattle's Harborview Medical Center after suffering a crushed skull, according to the booking paperwork. Two other people also were taken to the Seattle trauma center, hospital spokeswoman Susan Gregg said.

Seven of the people hurt were juveniles between the ages of 1 and 14, Leary said.

NAME:

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Leary added that five children and a woman, 37, who all live together in Startup were among the injured.

Two of the people taken to Harborview were listed in satisfactory condition; Gregg was looking into the condition of the third person. The other victims were taken to Snohomish County hospitals.

According to the State Patrol: Lee was driving the Durango east on Highway 2 around 6:20 p.m. when she failed to stop for two other vehicles in front of her — one had stopped and the other had slowed — near milepost 17. The Durango struck one of the two cars, then skidded into oncoming traffic, hitting another vehicle head-on. A fifth car in the oncoming lanes drove into a ditch to avoid the other cars.

Lee's driving history includes citations for driving with a suspended license and operating a vehicle without insurance.

Seattle Times news researcher Miyoko Wolf and The Associated Press contributed to this story.

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